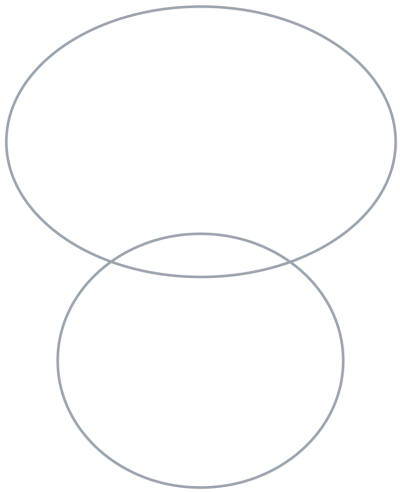
How to draw an owl

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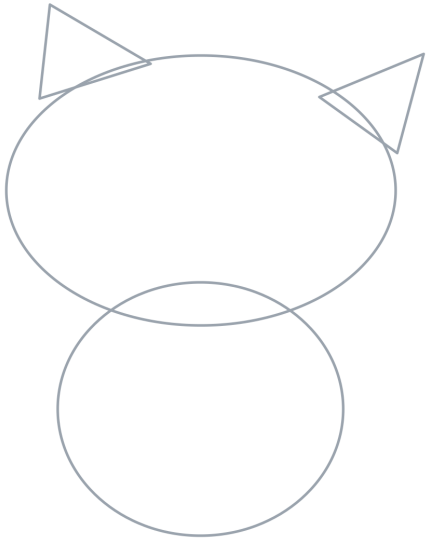
Build a perched owl from a broad head oval and a smaller body oval. Simple wedges, face ovals and leaf-shaped wings show where the finished curves belong; erase only the light gray guides as each part is completed.



1. Place the head and body

Lightly draw a wide oval for the head. Put a smaller, nearly round oval beneath it, about three-quarters as wide. Overlap their edges slightly so the head rests on the body.

Check: Leave space below the body for two small feet and a branch.



2. Plan the two crown tufts

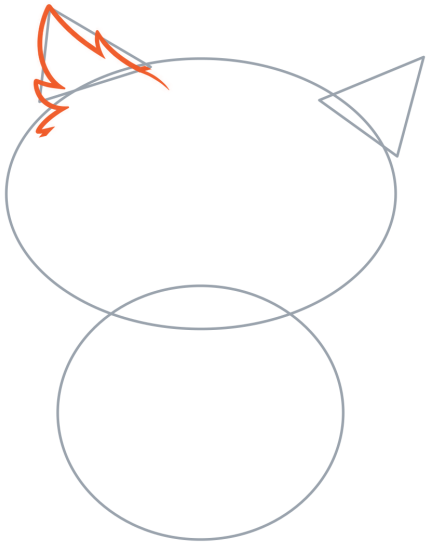
Add a simple wedge at each upper corner of the head oval. Point the left wedge upward and the right wedge outward. Let each wedge overlap the oval instead of sitting above it.

Check: These light wedges locate the large tuft tips; they are not finished feather lines.

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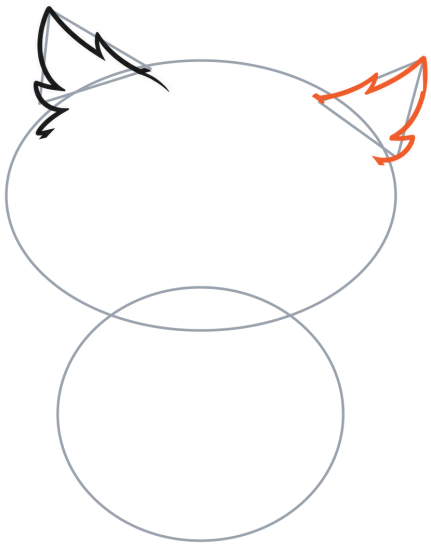
Follow the pictures at your own pace. Check each new shape before moving on.



3. Finish the first crown tuft

Begin at the tall tip of the left wedge. Bow down its outside and turn through the small outward-and-back feather points at the base. From the tall tip, sweep inward, make the short upper point, then curve toward the head arch.

Check: Keep the two base ends open for the cheek and arch joins. Complete this tuft before its partner.



4. Finish the second crown tuft

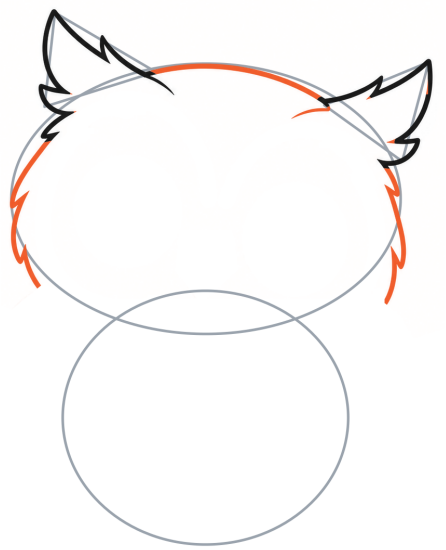
Start at the far tip of the right wedge. Curve down the outside and turn outward and back through the short lower feather point. From the far tip, sweep inward through the small upper point toward the head arch.

Check: This tuft tilts outward with the head. Its inner end will join the arch; its lower end will join the cheek.

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5. Connect the arch and cheeks

Join the inner tuft ends with a broad curved arch along the top of the head oval. From each lower tuft end, follow the oval down the side, turning outward and back at the small cheek points. Stop at the shoulders.

Check: The arch and cheek curves meet the finished tufts. Leave the lower cheek ends open for the shoulder joins.



6. Place the first face patch and eye

Inside the left half of the head, lightly draw a tall oval. Let its lower edge reach the head oval's lower edge. Add a smaller circle inside it, a little nearer the centre of the head.

Check: The eye circle is a little over half the patch's width; leave a wide rim around it.

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7. Shape the first face patch

Start near the upper inside edge of the tall oval. Curve over its top and around the outer cheek, using two short feather points near the upper outside edge. Continue beneath the eye and stop before the middle of the face.

Check: Leave the inside of the patch open. Do not close a full oval across the beak space.



8. Finish the first round eye

Follow the smaller circle to make a round eye. Add its large pupil toward the middle of the face and leave one small white highlight.

Check: The complete eye sits inside the larger patch; the white rim stays visible.

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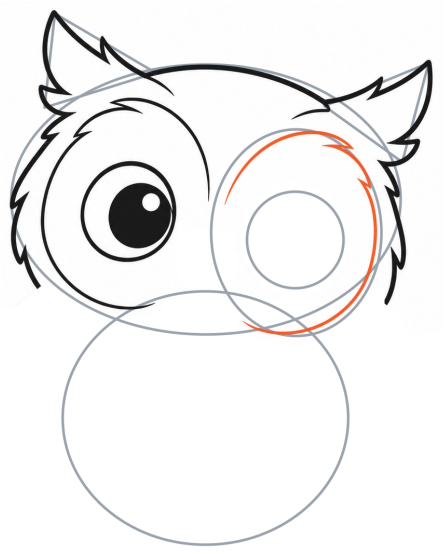
Follow the pictures at your own pace. Check each new shape before moving on.



9. Place the second face patch

Erase only the first patch and eye guides. Add matching oval-and-circle guides on the right, slightly lower than the first pair to follow the head tilt.

Check: Match the sizes before adding the second patch's feather points.



10. Shape the second face patch

Curve around the right patch guide from its upper inside edge, over the top and down the outside. Add the small upper feather points, then turn beneath the eye and stop before the centre.

Check: The two patches leave a clear space between them for the beak.

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11. Finish the other eye

Complete the circle inside the right patch. Place the dark pupil toward the middle of the face, leaving its small highlight white.

Check: Keep the pictured inward pupil positions and the slight difference in eye height.



12. Add the beak between the eyes

Between the eyes, just below their centres, draw a small rounded triangle pointing down. Make it about half an eye's width and keep it clear of both eye circles.

Check: The lower point sits in the open space between the face patches.

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13. Clear the finished head guides

Erase the gray right patch, eye circle, head oval and tuft wedges. Keep every black cheek, tuft, patch, eye and beak line. Leave the body oval for the next parts.

Check: Only temporary gray marks disappear.



14. Place the first wrapping wing

At the left shoulder beneath the head, lightly draw a long leaf shape. Bow its outer edge outward and bring its pointed end down beside the lower body oval. Its inner edge curves back to the shoulder.

Check: The wing is about as tall as the visible body; its tip stays beside the body, not beneath the feet.

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15. Locate the first wing overlap

Inside that leaf, add a long light curve from its upper inner side toward the outer edge halfway down. Add a shorter light curve near the pointed lower end. These divide the wing into overlapping feather shapes.

Check: The curves guide the overlap; they do not cross outside the leaf.



16. Turn the first wing into kept curves

Begin at the shoulder and round the outer wing down toward its point. Return along the inner edge. At the overlap marks, turn one curved feather edge into the next. Add the short upper curl and the inner lower curve.

Check: Each inner curve stops at its feather edge or tapers inside the wing; no line crosses the body.

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17. Place the other wing

Erase only the left wing's gray leaf and overlap marks. Add a matching leaf at the right shoulder, with its point beside the lower body. Let it wrap inward in the opposite direction.

Check: Keep the first wing complete while placing its partner.



18. Locate the second wing overlap

Add the matching long and short light curves inside the right leaf. Let them bend toward the outer edge, reversing the first wing's direction.

Check: Both wings have room for a broad upper feather and a pointed lower feather.

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19. Finish the second wrapping wing

Follow the right leaf from the shoulder around its outer curve and pointed end. Use the light overlap marks to join its curved feather edges. Add the short upper curl and inner lower curve.

Check: Finish the whole wing before adding the body or chest details.



20. Join the body between the wings

Erase the right wing's gray marks. Follow the visible parts of the body oval between and below the wings. Stop at each wing edge and leave the two foot positions open along the bottom. Add the short shoulder joins beneath the face.

Check: The body joins the wings; hidden lines behind them stay undrawn.

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21. Add one complete chest feather row

Across the upper belly, draw three broad joined U-shaped scallops from left to right. Begin inside the left wing and stop before the right wing.

Check: Keep this row complete and leave room below for another.



22. Repeat the chest row

Add a matching row of three joined scallops below the first, leaving a clear strip of white space between them.

Check: The rows decorate the body without changing its outline.

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23. Place the first gripping foot

Along the lower-left part of the body oval, lightly draw three narrow, overlapping upright ovals. Let their tops touch the body and their lower ends hang beneath it.

Check: The whole foot is a little narrower than one eye.



24. Finish the first foot

Round the three toes along those ovals, keeping their lower tips distinct. Stop shared edges where one toe overlaps the next instead of drawing through it.

Check: Complete all three toes before adding the other foot or the branch.

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25. Place the other foot

Erase only the first foot's gray ovals. Place three matching ovals on the lower-right body, leaving about one foot-width between the two groups.

Check: Both feet hang to the same level.



26. Finish the second foot

Curve the three right toes around their guides. Preserve their shared edges and rounded tips, matching the first foot's grip.

Check: There are two complete groups of three toes.

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27. Draw the branch behind the feet

Draw a gently bending branch beneath the owl. Run its upper edge up to each foot, stop at the toes, and continue on the other side. Add a lower edge, rounded ends and a few short wood curves.

Check: The toes stay in front; no branch line passes through them.



28. Remove the last gray guides

Erase the body oval and the three right-foot ovals. Keep the belly, wings, feet and branch exactly where they were drawn.

Check: The owl is grounded on its branch and no gray marks remain.

Try drawing it yourself

Use the picture steps to draw here. Print at Actual Size; use a pencil and eraser.

Your finished drawing

Your owl is complete, with two face patches, wrapping wings and two feet gripping a branch. All temporary placement guides have been removed.

29. Check the complete perched owl

Check the two face patches, inward pupils, wrapping wings and gripping feet. Keep the finished contours and both chest rows. Colouring is optional.



Make it your own

After the line drawing is complete, you can choose the owl's feather colours and the branch colour.